



**Illinois  
Department of Commerce  
& Economic Opportunity**

JB Pritzker, Governor

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**Governor Pritzker Announces \$6 Million in Funding for Energy Transition Navigators Program**

*Eligible Community-Based Providers Can Apply to Serve as Energy Transition Navigators*

**SPRINGFIELD** – Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) launched \$6 million in funding for the Energy Transition Navigators Program as part of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) this week. The program will establish a network of community-based providers across the state offering community education, outreach, and recruitment services to encourage priority populations to participate in CEJA clean energy workforce and contractor development programs. The Energy Transition Navigators will be selected through a competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process.

“At the heart of our landmark Climate and Equitable Jobs Act sits our people—and the Energy Transition Navigators Program will ensure that historically underserved communities have the opportunity to take part in our clean energy workforce,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “Together, we are building an environmentally and economically prosperous future—one where every Illinoisan has access to the good-paying jobs of tomorrow, while we create a cleaner and more sustainable world.”

“This new funding for the Energy Transition Navigation Program is an incredible step towards environmental justice,” **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. “Communities, which have often been neglected in climate and environmental justice, will now have the opportunity to be a part of this clean energy workforce. Solutions that include the voices and lived experiences of our all communities will create a lasting impact for generations to come.”

Once selected, Navigator Teams will play a critical role in ensuring priority populations have access to the many CEJA training, workforce and community programs by providing outreach and recruitment services – helping ensure equitable access for diverse populations and Illinoisans impacted by energy transitions. Navigator Teams will also assist individuals in accessing Energy Transition Barrier Reduction Program services, such as transportation, childcare, supplies, and other expenditures that often amount to roadblocks to success.

“CEJA goes beyond creating a handful of programs – it creates an entire ecosystem to move Illinois toward our clean energy future,” **said DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. “The Energy Transition Navigators will ensure that our training programs are accessible and equitable by recruiting and supporting Illinoisans who have historically faced barriers to good-paying jobs.”

Navigator Teams will lead outreach and recruitment efforts, providing information and consultation to priority populations on training opportunities and supportive services available through CEJA and other statewide and local workforce development programs. Navigator Teams will also support applying for workforce programs and guidance on training and career opportunities in the emerging clean energy economy.

“The groundbreaking CEJA legislation pushes our state toward a carbon-free future while providing numerous opportunities for good-paying union jobs in the clean energy workforce,” **said Sen. Dave Koehler (D-Peoria)**. “The Navigator Teams will play a pivotal role in building a bridge between communities who have historically faced barriers and the good-paying jobs in the clean energy economy that will make an impact for generations to come.”

In coordination with local workforce teams, Navigator Teams will engage with local employers, industry leaders, and unions to identify the skill and hiring needs of the local clean energy industry to tailor training program offerings, career pathway support, and job placement for eligible individuals.

“The Energy Transition Navigators Program will provide hands-on support where it matters the most – on the ground in neighborhoods across Illinois,” **said Rep. Dagmara Avelar (D-Bolingbrook)**. “The Navigators’ collaboration and coordination with local community-based organizations is essential to building trust with Illinois families who are eligible to participate in the CEJA workforce and development programs.”

DCEO will make awards to serve the 13 regional workforce hubs of the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, as outlined in statute, including Chicago (South Side, Southwest Side and West Side), Waukegan, Rockford, Aurora, Joliet, Peoria, Champaign, Danville, Decatur, Carbondale, East St. Louis, and Alton.

“The tremendous efforts that went into passing the landmark CEJA legislation did not end the day it was signed into law,” **said Rep. Marcus C. Evans, Jr. (D-Chicago)**. “We’re continuing to work around the clock to ensure every Illinoisan – from the South Side and beyond – has equitable access to the multitude of workforce and training opportunities available through CEJA.”

Eligible applicants interested in serving as Clean Energy Navigators include not-for-profit organizations with a history of serving low-wage or low-skilled workers or individuals from economically disadvantaged communities. Eligible applicants will also have a history of delivering a range of career services from assessment to job placement, to career counseling, with knowledge of clean-energy training and career opportunities in their region.

Qualified entities can apply for grants between \$250,000 to \$600,000 annually. Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until funds are depleted. Applications submitted by 5:00 p.m. August 15, 2023, will be included in the first review cycle. To view the NOFO and apply for the grant,

please visit the [DCEO website](#). Interested parties are encouraged to reach out to CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov for application assistance.

To help applicants prepare to apply for funding, DCEO will also be hosting a CEJA Workforce Ecosystem and Partner Building informational webinar on June 22 from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. [[Register here](#)]

The Energy Transition Navigators Program is one of several workforce programs established by the landmark CEJA legislation. Under CEJA, DCEO will administer approximately \$180 million per year in workforce and community support programs designed to build Illinois' clean energy economy and prepare the state's workforce and communities for the jobs of the future.

DCEO is responsible for implementing programs to prepare Illinois' workforce for the transition to clean energy and to support communities undergoing energy transitions, including the following:

- Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program (20 ILCS 730/5-45)
- Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program (20 ILCS 730/5-55)
- Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program ("Clean Jobs Hubs") (20 ILCS 730/5-20)
- Coal to Solar and Energy Storage Initiative Fund (20 ILCS 3855/1-75)
- Energy Transition Barrier Reduction Program (20 ILCS 730/5-30)
- Energy Transition Community Support Grants (20 ILCS 730/10-20)
- Energy Transition Navigators Program (20 ILCS 730/5-35)
- Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program (20 ILCS 730/5-40)
- Jobs and Environmental Justice Grant Program (20 ILCS 730/5-60)
- Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program (20 ILCS 730/5-50)

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